

Applicant : Y. Long He et al.
Serial No. : 10/076,129
Filed : February 13, 2002
Page : 2 of 10

Attorney Docket: 10559-583001 / P12764

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously amended) A method, comprising:
providing a substrate material comprising a quartz plate;
providing a gas for generating a plasma, the gas including a first component and a second component selected such that varying the ratio of the first component to the second component varies the rate of etching of one location of the substrate relative to another location on the substrate;
generating the plasma; and
using the plasma to etch the substrate material.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising controlling the rate of etching at a peripheral portion and a central portion of the substrate material by selecting the amount of said first component and second component in the gas.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the rate of etching near the peripheral portion is substantially equal to the rate of etching near the central portion.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said first and second components are selected to generate different ratios of negative ions to electrons within the plasma.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said first component comprises molecules C_xF_y , x and y being integers.

Applicant : Y. Long He et al.
Serial No. : 10/076,129
Filed : February 13, 2002
Page : 3 of 10

Attorney Docket: 10559-583001 / P12764

6. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1 or 5, wherein said second component comprises at least one of silicon fluoride, phosphorous fluoride, and sulfur fluoride.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first component comprises molecules C_xF_y , x and y being integers, and the second component comprises SF_6 .

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the first component comprises CF_4 .

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the volume ratio of the first component to the second component is between about 100:1 to 5:1.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the volume ratio of the first component to the second component is between about 50:1 to 10:1.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the volume ratio of the first component to the second component is between about 25:1 to 15:1.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the plasma is sustained by an electromagnetic field having a frequency of about 13 ~~mega-hertz~~ megahertz.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising sustaining the plasma by a first electromagnetic field and a second electromagnetic field, the first electromagnetic field having a frequency of about 13 megahertz, the second electromagnetic field having a frequency of about 2 ~~magahertz~~ megahertz.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the substrate material comprises a semiconductor wafer.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (Previously amended) The method of claim 2, further comprising controlling the rate of etching at the peripheral portion to be within about 1% of the rate of etching at the central portion, the peripheral portion being at least about 50 mm from the central portion.

Applicant : Y. Long He et al.
Serial No. : 10/076,129
Filed : February 13, 2002
Page : 4 of 10

Attorney Docket: 10559-583001 / P12764

17. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the first component is carbon tetrafluoride, the second component is sulfur hexafluoride, the volume ratio of (first component):(second component) is about 40:1, and the method further comprising sustaining the plasma by using a first electromagnetic field and a second electromagnetic field, the first electromagnetic field having a frequency of about 13 megahertz and the second electromagnetic field having a frequency of about 2 megahertz.

18. (Previously amended) A method, comprising:
providing a substrate material comprising a quartz plate,
providing a gas for generating a plasma, the gas including a first component comprising molecules C_xF_y , x and y being integers, and a second component comprising at least one of silicon fluoride, phosphorous fluoride, and sulfur fluoride;
generating the plasma; and
etching the substrate material.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the first component comprises CF_4 and the second component comprises SF_6 .

20. (Original) The method of claim 18 or 19 wherein the volume ratio of the first component to the second component is about 20:1.

21. (Previously amended) A method, comprising:
providing a gas for generating a plasma in a chamber, the gas including a first component and a second component, wherein the first component produces a positive plasma and the second component produces a negative plasma, the positive plasma having more electrons than negative ions, the negative plasma having more negative ions than electrons;
generating the plasma; and
controlling the ion distribution within the chamber by selecting the amount of the first component and the second component.

Applicant : Y. Long He et al.
Serial No. : 10/076,129
Filed : February 13, 2002
Page : 5 of 10

Attorney Docket: 10559-583001 / P12764

22. (Previously amended) The method of claim 21 wherein the first component comprises molecules C_xF_y , x and y being integers, and the second component comprises at least one of sulfur fluoride, silicon fluoride, and phosphorus fluoride.

23. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein the first component comprises CF_4 and the second component comprises SF_6 .

24. (Withdrawn) An apparatus comprising:
a chamber;
a support located within the chamber;
a quartz plate supported by the support;
a high frequency energy source;
a first gas supply providing a first gas, the first etchant gas comprising C_xF_y molecules, x and y being integers;
a first inlet for introducing the first gas into the chamber to form a first plasma gas when energized by the high frequency energy source;
a second gas supply providing a second gas, the second etchant gas comprising S_pF_q molecules, p and q being integers; and
a second inlet for introducing the second gas into the chamber to form a second plasma gas when energized by the high frequency energy source;
wherein the first and second plasma gas are used to etch the quartz plate.

25. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 24, further comprising a flow controller for controlling the amount of the first and second etchant gases entering the chamber.

26. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the first gas is carbon fluoride and the second gas is sulfur fluoride.

Applicant : Y. Long He et al.
Serial No. : 10/076,129
Filed : February 13, 2002
Page : 6 f 10

Attorney Docket: 10559-583001 / P12764

27. (Previously added) The method of claim 18, further comprising adjusting a ratio of the first component to the second component such that the plasma etches the substrate material at a substantially uniform rate across a substantial portion of the substrate material.

28. (Previously added) The method of claim 21, wherein controlling the ion distribution comprises controlling the distribution of a first group of positive ions generated from the first component such that the density of the first group of positive ions decreases radially from a central region of the chamber towards a peripheral region of the chamber.

29. (Previously added) The method of claim 28, wherein controlling the ion distribution comprises controlling the distribution of a second group of positive ions generated from the second component such that the density of the second group of positive ions increases radially from a central region of the chamber towards a peripheral region of the chamber.

30. (Previously added) The method of claim 29, further comprising providing a substrate in the chamber and controlling the distribution of first and second groups of positive ions such that the density of the sum of the first and second groups of positive ions is substantially uniform across a substantial portion of the substrate.

31. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:
providing a ~~dielectric~~ substrate comprising a quartz plate, portions of the substrate being covered by a resist;

providing a gas to generate a plasma, the gas including a first component and a second component selected such that varying the ratio of the first component to the second component varies the rate of etching of one location of the substrate relative to another location on the substrate, the first and second components selected such that the plasma etches the ~~dielectric~~ substrate at a rate that is faster than a rate that the plasma etches the resist;

generating the plasma;

using the plasma to etch portions of the ~~dielectric~~ substrate not covered by the resist; and

Applicant : Y. Long He et al.
Serial No. : 10/076,129
Filed : February 13, 2002
Page : 7 of 10

Attorney Docket: 10559-583001 / P12764

supplying the gas with the first and second components at a ratio such that the plasma etches portions of the substrate not covered by the resist at a substantially uniform rate across a substantial portion of the substrate.

32. (Cancelled) The method of claim 31, wherein the dielectric substrate comprises quartz.

33. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:
providing a substrate in a chamber, the substrate comprising a quartz plate;
providing a first gas including carbon fluoride $C_{x1}F_{y1}$, $x1$ and $y1$ being integers;
providing a second gas including molecules comprising at least one of sulfur fluoride $S_{x2}F_{y2}$, phosphorous fluoride $P_{x3}F_{y3}$, and silicon fluoride $Si_{x4}F_{y4}$, $x2$, $x3$, $x4$, $y2$, $y3$, and $y4$ being integers;

supplying an electromagnetic field at a predetermined power level to energize the first and second gases into a plasma; and

adjusting a ratio of the first gas to the second gas so that the plasma etches the substrate material at a substantially uniform rate across a substantial portion of the substrate.

34. (Previously added) The method of claim 33, further comprising adjusting a pressure of a chamber enclosing the substrate and the plasma to a predetermined pressure level.

35. (Previously added) A method, comprising:
providing a substrate in a chamber;
providing a first gas selected so that when the first gas is energized by an electromagnetic field having a predetermined power and under a predetermined chamber pressure, the first gas is energized into a plasma having more negative ions than electrons;

providing a second gas selected so that when the second gas is energized by an electromagnetic field having the predetermined power level and under the predetermined chamber pressure level, the second gas is energized into a plasma having more electrons than negative ions;

Applicant : Y. Long He et al.
Serial No. : 10/076,129
Filed : February 13, 2002
Page : 8 of 10

Attorney Docket: 10559-583001 / P12764

applying an electromagnetic field to the first and second gases to generate a plasma; and adjusting the amount of the first gas and the second gas in the chamber so that the density of positive ions generated from the first and second gases near the surface of the substrate is substantially uniform across a substantial portion of the substrate.

36. (Previously added) The method of claim 35, further comprising using the plasma to etch the substrate.

37. (Previously added) The method of claim 35, wherein the first gas is also selected so that when the first gas is energized into a plasma by an electromagnetic field having the predetermined power and under the predetermined chamber pressure, positive ions generated from the first gas has a density distribution that increases radially from a central region of the substrate surface towards a peripheral region of the substrate surface.

38. (Previously added) The method of claim 37, wherein the second gas is also selected so that when the second gas is energized into a plasma by an electromagnetic field having the predetermined power and under the predetermined chamber pressure, positive ions generated from the second gas has a density distribution that decreases radially from a central region of the substrate surface towards a peripheral region of the substrate surface.

39. (Previously added) The method of claim 35, wherein the volume ratio of the first gas to the second gas is between 1:10 to 1:100.

40. (Currently amended) The method of claim 35, wherein which the substrate comprises quartz.